

STATE HISTORICAL
SOCIETY OF IOWA
IOWA DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS

The Annals of Iowa

Volume 10 | Number 2 (1911)

pps. 156-156

Newell Jamieson Miller

ISSN 0003-4827

Material in the public domain. No restrictions on use.



This work has been identified with a [Creative Commons Public Domain Mark 1.0](https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/).

Recommended Citation

"Newell Jamieson Miller." *The Annals of Iowa* 10 (1911), 156-156.

Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0003-4827.3709>

Hosted by [Iowa Research Online](http://iowaresearchonline.org/)

WITTER H. JOHNSTON was born in Sidney, New York, July 24, 1837; he died at Fort Dodge, Iowa, June 6, 1911. His parents were of Scotch-Irish, English and German descent and were highly educated people of New-England birth. In one direct line of his ancestry were six physicians. There were prominent ministers, and patriots in this and other lines. Captain Johnston was educated in the common schools of New York and at Franklin Academy. He spent a year in Wabash College at Crawfordsville, Indiana. After devoting some time to school teaching, he enlisted in the One Hundred Forty-fourth New York Infantry. His regiment was principally engaged in garrison work, but participated in the battle of James Island, South Carolina, February 10, 1865, where Captain Johnston was severely wounded. It is said of him that while being carried to the rear a comrade expressed sympathy with him only to be met with: "What are you doing here? Get to your place in front." Upon being discharged from the hospital he returned to Binghamton, N. Y., where he finished his law study and was admitted to the bar. He soon removed to Fort Dodge, Iowa, where he began the practice of law, continuing until his appointment about twenty years ago to the deputy clerkship of the United States Court.

Captain Johnston performed his greatest public service through an unselfish and untiring application of his talents to library interests. He was first to establish a private library association in his home city, and induced others to help him in the creation of a small library and reading room in his office building. He served gratuitously as the librarian for many years. Out of this grew the present Fort Dodge Public Library, which largely through the labors of Captain Johnston has become more than merely a collection of books and a beautiful edifice, developing a deep and genuine taste of the public of his home city for library advantages. His influence extended far beyond the limits of Fort Dodge, into and through the work of the Iowa State Library Association of which he was one of the founders, its president and at the time of his death an honorary president. He was a moulding influence in the Iowa Library Commission of which he had been a member for many years.

NEWELL JAMIESON MILLER was born in Connorsville, Indiana, June 13, 1839; he died at Des Moines, Iowa, June 6, 1911. While Mr. Miller seldom performed conspicuous public service, he was a most valuable, intimate and constant associate of powerful figures in Iowa politics of the past generation. He was an intimate friend of John A. Kasson, by whom he was appointed a railway mail clerk in 1874. Besides a rare efficiency in this service he won the tender admiration of all in his official and public acquaintance by his fortitude. While on duty April 6, 1875, his car was wrecked at Tyrone, Iowa. Mr. Miller was thrown against a heated stove and pinned there until his left ear, jaw and part of his skull were burned off. For two years his life hung in the balance. Out of regard for his comfort bells in the churches and schools in his vicinity remained silent. His case was examined and surgical operations performed by many men of the highest advancement in surgery. He recovered, reentered the mail service and continued therein until 1889, when he was made superintendent of mails of the Des Moines postoffice under a special act of Congress. In this situation he served most creditably until he died of paralysis.

Copyright of *Annals of Iowa* is the property of State of Iowa, by & through the State Historical Society of Iowa and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.